

MINUTES
WOODSTOCK CITY COUNCIL

November 2, 2021
City Council Chambers

A regular meeting of the Woodstock City Council was called to order at 7:00 PM on Tuesday, November 2, 2021 by Mayor Michael Turner in the Council Chambers at Woodstock City Hall. He explained the Consent Calendar process, invited public participation, and noted, as is the City's policy, this evening's meeting is being live streamed with a recording archived should members of the public wish to view it in the future.

A roll call was taken.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Darrin Flynn, Lisa Lohmeyer, Wendy Piersall, Bob Seegers, Sr., Gordon Tebo, and Mayor Michael Turner.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Nierman

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Roscoe Stelford, City Attorney Ruth Schlossberg, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Paul Christensen, Chief John Lieb, Public Works Director Christina Betz, Economic Development Director Garrett Anderson, Library Director Nick Weber, Human Resources Director Debbie Schober, City Planner Darrell Moore, Communications/Grants Manager Terry Willcockson, and City Clerk Cindy Smiley.

III. FLOOR DISCUSSION

A. Recognition of Service

1. CMAP Visionary Leader Award Presentation to Dr. Brian Sager

Mayor Turner stated the City is delighted to host this presentation because of the designee. He stated the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) is a regional planning organization that works with counties and municipalities throughout the Chicago area. Noting they recently announced five major awards, he stated it is with great honor and personal pride that CMAP chose his friend, former Mayor Brian Sager, as a recipient of one of them. He introduced CMAP Executive Director Erin Aleman and McHenry County Board Member Carolyn Schofield.

Ms. Aleman stated she is proud and excited to present CMAP's first Regional Excellence Award for Visionary Leader to Mayor Emeritus Dr. Brian Sager, stating he has earned this award after a long and distinguished career with the City of Woodstock. She stated Dr. Sager was selected by an independent panel, noting he was one of the most celebrated and distinguished nominees.

Ms. Schofield detailed Dr. Sager's service to improve the quality of life for the residents of Woodstock and McHenry County, thanking him for his decades of service to Woodstock, McHenry County, and northeastern Illinois.

Dr. Sager thanked the City Council for taking its time this evening to host this presentation. He also expressed his gratitude to Ms. Aleman and Ms. Schofield.

He stated he is grateful to accept this award on behalf of the entirety of Woodstock, McHenry County, and the region. Dr. Sager stated it is the greatest honor of his life to work together for the common good and accepts this award on behalf of all who do so.

Dr. Sager stated it is apropos that this recognition is occurring on the same night as the Employee Service Awards presentation, stating one of the true joys he had as Mayor was to work with this group of kind and dedicated public servants.

Dr. Sager was recognized with hearty applause by those present.

2. Employee Service Awards

Mayor Turner stated Council is pleased to recognize employees who have reached service milestones with the City of Woodstock. Addressing the employees, he noted the importance of what they do is critical to the residents and businesses, stating they should take pride in their roles as their accomplishments are incredibly important.

Mayor Turner recognized those employees who were receiving awards for 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, 25 years, 30 years, and 35 years of service, congratulating all and thanking them for their service. The employees were recognized with hearty applause by those present.

B. Presentation – McHenry County Co-Responder Police Social Worker

Mayor Turner stated this issue has been under discussion and consideration across the country. He stated the City of Woodstock has looked at options for this while still delivering the Police Department's primary mission of public safety.

Chief Lieb noted the Woodstock Police Department participated in a limited social worker pilot program a number of years ago, which ended and has recently been researching select models. He stated McHenry County hosted meetings with County leaders and Chiefs of Police regarding one such program they believe could meet with success. He stated representatives from the County are here this evening to present this program to the City stating with Council's support the Woodstock Police Department could work toward implementation.

Sgt. Aimee Knop and Social Worker Alana Bak made a presentation on the McHenry County Co-Responder Police Social Worker Program.

Sgt. Knop and Ms. Bak described the program as follows: The program has three key components: Law Enforcement, Police Social Workers, and Social Service Providers. Police Social Workers will be assigned to law enforcement agencies, being on-call 24/7 for consultation or to respond to calls for service. They would provide services to participating departments including referrals and referral follow-up with Social Service Providers, crisis/short-term counseling, and education and guidance to officers. A Program Director with experience and knowledge in law enforcement services and social services in the County will oversee the program. The Social Service Providers would provide residents with direct social services and professional assistance. The program will bridge gaps between cross-jurisdictional families and form dependable relationships with individuals, clinicians, providers, and other agencies.

In response to a question from Mayor Turner, Chief Lieb stated this presentation was brought forward this evening to seek direction from the Council on if the City should move forward with this program for the benefit of the citizens of Woodstock. He opined the officers could use the assistance.

Mayor Turner stated the goals of the program are laudable and the need has been identified. He stated his goal is to make sure public safety is taken care of and the burden on officers is reduced. He stated if this would help the Department be more efficient and have a positive impact on people's lives while maintaining public safety, he is interested. Mayor Turner stated he is not interested in replacing Police with Social Workers, which is unacceptable to him and, he believes would be unacceptable to the community.

Stating he likes the collaboration and use of shared resources, Mayor Turner stated he supports putting this program in place if the Chief and Council are supportive as well. He stated, if implemented he would like to see assessments made to see the impact and changes the program makes.

Councilwoman Piersall expressed her support of such a program, noting the number of mental health calls received by the Police Department and the Fire/Rescue District.

Councilwoman Lohmeyer expressed her overwhelming support.

Councilman Tebo expressed his support, as long as the program complements the Police and does not replace them. In response to his questions, Ms. Bak further explained how the Social Workers will assist the Police in a supportive role, giving a specific recent example. She also explained how an advisory council will be established to assess the program to make sure the needs of the partners and the communities are met.

In response to questions from the Council, a brief discussion ensued of implementation of the Program, with Chief Lieb, noting it will take some time for the entire program to get up to speed.

Councilman Flynn expressed support of the program, opining it will be a great tool.

Noting his sense Council is supportive of this initiative, Mayor Turner stated Chief Lieb should look to implement this program and work with the City Manager for funding, bringing it back to Council if needed. He thanked Chief Lieb, Sgt. Knop, and Ms. Bak for their work on the program.

C. Public Comments

John Stroh, 832 Clay Street, requested Council's help in getting a stop sign on the northeast corner of Route 120, Church Street, and Clay Street opining this is a dangerous intersection with an obstructed view, and describing recent incidents he observed.

Mr. Stelford stated this location will have to meet the warrants of the state in order for placement of a stop sign. Mayor Turner stated the City will look at this, asking Mr. Stelford and Ms. Betz to talk with Mr. Stroh and assess the options. He asked Mr. Stroh to provide his contact information and to work with Mr. Stelford and Ms. Betz.

C. Council Comments

There were no comments forthcoming from the City Council.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by D. Flynn, second by W. Piersall, to approve the Consent Agenda.

In response to a question from Mayor Turner, there were no requests from Council or the Public to remove items from the Consent Agenda

In response to a question from Mayor Turner, there were no questions or comments forthcoming from the Public or the Council regarding items remaining on the Consent Agenda.

Mayor Turner affirmed the Consent Agenda to include items A through D, as follows:

A. APPROVAL OF CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

October 19, 2021 City Council Minutes

B. WARRANTS: 3977 3978**C. MINUTES AND REPORTS:**

Building and Zoning Year End Report	December 2019
Building and Zoning Year End Report	December 2020
Old Courthouse and Sheriff's House Commission	February 8, 2021
Old Courthouse and Sheriff's House Commission	August 25, 2021
Environment Commission	September 2, 2021
Transportation Commission	September 15, 2021

D. MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 181:

1. Resolution – Property Tax Levy – Approval of Resolution 21-R-23, identified as Document 1, *A Resolution Estimating the Calendar Year 2021 Property Tax Levy in Accordance with the Truth in Taxation Act (35ILCS 200/18-60)*

2. Award of Contract – Liquid Alum – Authorization to award a contract for the purchase and delivery of Liquid Alum to the lowest responsible bidder, Affinity Chemical, Flanders, NJ, at the bid unit price of \$353.00 per dry ton for all purchases throughout calendar year 2022.

A roll call vote was taken. Ayes: D. Flynn, G. Tebo, L. Lohmeyer, W. Piersall, B. Seegers, and Mayor M. Turner. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: T. Nierman. Motion carried.

V. DISCUSSION**1. Creative Woodstock Business Plan**

Nick Weber made a presentation regarding the Creative Woodstock Business Plan. He thanked Sue Stelford and Jessica Campbell, stating they were instrumental in the development of the plan.

Mr. Weber clarified the role of the Creative Woodstock Manager, noting he or she will not be teaching classes or conducting tours, but rather would find volunteers and contractors to do so and would be the hub for everything that is going on. He also talked about the role of the Manager in the events that will be put on by Creative Woodstock noting these will not be the majority of the events. Noting Creative Woodstock will be a centralized area of creativity, he stated the role of

the Manager will be to make this work.

Mr. Weber stated while he remains committed, this should be a City service, opining this is critical as a private company would not be able to address the needed level of expertise and independent oversight to make sure Creative Woodstock meets the needs of residents and others.

Mr. Weber noted the area to be devoted to Creative Woodstock has changed, with the Chamber and Creative Woodstock exchanging spaces, explaining this further, including why this will work better for both entities. He stated this will also allow for the inclusion of micro-incubators for future startup businesses.

Mr. Weber stated there is a great possibility for grants for this proposal.

He stated most of the labor will come from 1099 contractors. He noted, in response to concerns expressed by Council members, he has increased City staffing a bit.

Mr. Weber stated arts and creativity are widely held noting people like to do creative, arts-related, cultural activities, opining Creative Woodstock will have a strong appeal for tourists. He further opined this is the vibe the Mayor has talked about and has wide appeal to get people to come to the community.

Concerning solvency, Mr. Weber stated Creative Woodstock will have a small profit by the end of the second year, noting it will take a bit of time to “ramp up.”

Mr. Weber stated the plan and timeline are provided in the packet, as requested by Mayor Turner, opining it is a solid plan and accurate timeline, acknowledging it probably will have to be changed as construction progresses.

Agreeing with Mayor Turner’s previous comment that “Good can be the enemy of great,” Mr. Weber stated Creative Woodstock can be great for the City, the tenants of the Old Courthouse and the Square businesses.

Mayor Turner expressed his appreciation to Mr. Weber for staying with this and shooting high, opining this is a realistic plan. He stated he likes the rotation of the spaces.

Mayor Turner stated he still struggles with whether the space could be used for something else. Opining the plan will be judged as a business, not as a library, Mayor Turner stated there will have to be activity and action early to survive, with a variety of positive accomplishments in a short period of time.

Councilman Flynn opined the class fees indicated in the plan are low compared to other areas, expressing concern whether they will cover expenses. Mr. Weber stated the figures indicated are the average and conservative, with some fees being higher. Councilman Flynn also asked Mr. Weber to review his budget figures for alcohol and furniture, urging him to budget for furniture replacement.

In response to further questions from Councilman Flynn, Mr. Weber explained rental fees to the Chamber, and weekday/weekend liquor sales and gallery rental, with a brief discussion ensuing.

Councilman Flynn stated he is 100% behind this, but wants to make sure it is not a bar with art. In response, Mr. Weber stated liquor sales is an important part of the business plan, but the intent is not to be a bar. He stated alcohol is an after-hours component and that there will be private events as well as other events that will offer alcohol.

In response to questions from Councilman Flynn, Mr. Weber explained the fee structure for an art show, stating there would be a rental fee to the group putting on the show, plus a percentage of the sales. He noted he obtained the percentage figure through discussions with artists. He stated some of the shows will be juried and some will be exhibitions.

Noting millions of dollars are being put into the Old Courthouse, Councilman Tebo stated he wishes to make sure there is as much activity as possible. He stated the City should be shooting for 100% activity rather than how much money can be made. Mr. Weber stated the City needs to get a return on its investment, but the primary goal is to make this a dynamic space that has activity all the time.

A member of the public spoke from the audience, stating in the last 20 years NACC has brought an exhibit to the building every month, opining this would be a multi-use facility with art on the walls and activity all the time.

Councilman Seegers stated Mr. Weber's undertaking of this is incredible.

In response to a question from Mr. Seegers concerning where else the arts community derives money from the City, Mr. Stelford stated, if property taxes are considered, there are arts activities funded by the library and a portion of the City's hotel/motel taxes.

Councilman Seegers opined the residents who have spent the money for the Old Courthouse deserve the highest use proposal, opining this should be a highest-valued space on the Square. Noting Mr. Weber's proposal states Creative Woodstock will pay the same rent as a private tenant, he asked him about a guarantee as would be required by a private business. He opined the taxpayers deserve that this have a positive cash flow and not just be busy.

In response to a question from Councilman Seegers, Mr. Weber explained the tours and how the other tenants would be involved, noting this could be viewed as free advertising for them. Mayor Turner noted this could be addressed in the leases.

Opining Mr. Weber's revenue projections still need further development, Councilman Seegers urged him to budget every space individually to be more accurate.

Noting Mr. Weber's statement if Creative Woodstock reaches its full potential it will bring in more money than private business, Councilman Seegers stated private investment targets what is lucrative and has not yet targeted a proposal similar to Creative Woodstock.

Councilman Seegers stated the current condition of the streets is a result of "kicking the can down the road" in order to keep property taxes low, noting during this time the City never stopped supporting the arts community.

Councilman Seegers described the many communications he received supporting his comments at

the last meeting, questioning the survey cited which supported this idea.

Councilwoman Lohmeyer stated she feels Mr. Weber's enthusiasm. She expressed concern regarding the proposed salary of the Manager, opining it is too low and noting in the private sector this person would be an event coordinator who is paid much more. In response to questions concerning this, Mr. Weber further explained the pay structure for the position, noting it is incentive based. Councilwoman Lohmeyer also opined the amount proposed to be charged for events is too low. Mr. Weber stated the figures he used are conservative, opining they probably will be higher although he did not want to assume that and would rather be conservative.

Councilwoman Lohmeyer stated she does not wish to be timid and wants Creative Woodstock to be exciting, opining people would think it is more exciting if they charged more. Mr. Weber stated there will be some black-tie events that will cost more, but opined seniors, for example, should not be charged more. He agreed that evenings and weekends will have higher fees.

In response to a question from Councilwoman Piersall, Mr. Christensen stated it is proposed that the Chamber will pay lower rent than Creative Woodstock. Councilwoman Piersall stated this should be kept in mind. She stated she has an issue with the word "subsidy," opining this implies the City is getting nothing back. She stated the Economic Development Department has data available which indicates how much money the City gets back and how much is spent in the City's businesses when there is a show at the Opera House. She stated she has seen figures stating for every \$1 spent on the arts, \$6 is returned, opining this would be an investment in the community.

Councilwoman Piersall opined it is not fair to say the City has subsidized the arts and not the roads, noting the disparity in cost between the two.

She stated the Old Courthouse will be solvent and profitable in 15 years, whether or not Creative Woodstock takes residence, noting she is comfortable with giving the library this opportunity and is confident they will get past the first two- or three-year mark. She opined the people who funded this want to be able to use the building.

Councilwoman Piersall stated people come to Woodstock because it has cultural excellence, stating they do not come to a community because of Amazon. She opined this project has wide-range appeal for the community. She noted her children do not play baseball, but she is happy her money goes to the ballfields and parks, because they bring value to the properties and to the community as a whole.

Regarding a personal guarantee previously mentioned, Councilman Flynn asked Mr. Weber if he is firmly behind this proposal enough that if it lost money he would take it away from other library funds. In response to a question from Mr. Weber concerning the aforementioned scenario, Councilman Flynn stated the Library would get any profit realized by Creative Woodstock. Noting even though he is a risk-averse person, Mr. Weber stated if the Library would get the extra money, he might agree to Councilman Flynn's scenario. He stated he believes in Creative Woodstock and that it will work even better than the business plan indicates.

Noting there have been "ramp up" rates for other tenants, Councilman Flynn opined the lack of this for Creative Woodstock leads to the early deficits. He opined perhaps this should be considered.

Councilman Seegers urged Mr. Weber not to be afraid of missing a budget on the upside. In response to his question, Mr. Weber stated there would not be space in the library to do the programs and events proposed for Creative Woodstock. Mr. Stelford stated perhaps some of them could take place at the Opera House during the daytime.

Councilman Seegers stated he would be absolutely opposed to the Chamber paying less rent than the library. He took issue with Councilwoman Piersall's statements regarding streets vs. the arts. He stated he would 100% support the proposal if the losses are taken out of the library's budget and he would also support giving 100% of the gains to the library.

Mayor Turner stated he supports seeking both activity and revenue.

Councilman Tebo stated in spite of bad roads people still want to come to Woodstock for the arts noting when deciding to move to Woodstock, he looked at what kind of arts community it had. He stated he does not see Woodstock as a business opining the City cannot just say we need to make money. He stated he has no trouble with this because the City is doing a service to the community to support the arts. Councilman Tebo stated he appreciates Councilman Seegers' position, but wants to balance this out.

Mayor Turner stated there is still some uncertainty to him as to whether the City should be doing this, but noted he is closer after this evening and is willing to go out of the box. He stated this is an opportunistic space that is different than a playground and has to be treated differently by the City. He noted other uses have been looked at, stating he thinks this is an appropriate use.

Mayor Turner stated he does not feel this should be an RFP. He stated he would like to find some other examples of a not-for-profit or city using a small space for the arts community to come together in this way, opining Mr. Weber will want to tap into this and then apply his vision.

Mayor Turner stated he understands why this would not work in the library but suggested beginning to organize this entity to gets its name out in the community before the space in the Old Courthouse is ready. He opined this would allow Mr. Weber to learn and to update his business plan, starting sooner rather than later.

Mayor Turner opined this would be a good risk to take as the building is filled, stating it can work with Mr. Weber's expressed energy with the people and the arts community behind him. He stated the next step will be to show Council how much money will be needed from the City up front.

Mr. Christensen stated the City must confirm what will be in the building, noting there are different build outs needed for the various spaces. He stated if a use is not included at this time, it will result in extra cost when any changes are made. He stated the goal is to finalize the building space at the next Council meeting.

Mayor Turner opened the floor to Public Comment.

Ryan Gerry, 1716 Butterfield, expressed support of the County's proposed Co-Responder Social Worker Program.

He also expressed support of the Creative Woodstock proposal, stating the Old Courthouse is a public place and its use should return the public to the building and provided dedicated space for the benefit of the public. He opined arts are an essential part of life and add value to life.

Mr. Gerry stated he is not concerned about the need to realize a profit, as it will be a benefit to the community and attract people to Woodstock.

Janelle O'Malley, Union, stated she has worked in art education and talked about the profound effect art has on a community. She stated the Old Courthouse has had a long connection with the arts and should stay that way. She talked about other places that do this successfully providing free access to children, describing some of the events that take place. She stated there are grants and sponsorships available to fund these programs, noting her experience with these.

Noting the arts are what bring her to Woodstock, she opined this would make Woodstock a destination for young people and young families. She urged Council to keep arts in the Old Courthouse.

Anne Marie Whitmore Lenzini, President of the Clayworkers' Guild of Illinois, 8310 Castleberry Dr., stated every study that has been done of the people who voted Council into office has said this building should be kept for the arts community. She talked about people who have come into the Arts Center from everywhere, including other states. She stated she hopes what the people have stated they want the Old Courthouse to be can be maintained.

Dawn Zehr, 210 S. Hayward, stated she has been involved with the arts community through Atrocious Poets and that she works in collaboration with artists from Chicago and Elgin and all over the world online. She stated artists would value bringing an arts focus to the Square and would love being in an arts center in the jewel in the center of Woodstock. She stated what an arts center can do for a community is well documented. Ms. Zehr stated not-for-profits do not operate outside of capitalism, noting how they have access to grants to fund their programs. She stated it is not a business model, but is a different model.

Opining there are enough working artists ready to jump on board, Ms. Zehr stated Council has an opportunity to do something really cool and will be wasting that opportunity if they do not embrace Creative Woodstock.

Sophie Juhlin, West South Street, also a member of Atrocious Poets and an employee at Read Between the Lynes, stated she is excited to see what bringing the arts to Woodstock brings to the local businesses. She stated she has seen people come out in droves when arts-related events are held, which has been consistently good for the businesses and is important to keep going.

Sue Stelford, 21 North Street, stated the arts have intangible, but important benefits. She stated the Opera House is a driver that brings people to Woodstock, opining Creative Woodstock will be a driver and a satisfier. She stated there will be such a variety at Creative Woodstock, it will create the vibe and people will come. She noted the Opera House works in the same way as proposed for Creative Woodstock, and that space is rented out to groups, noting that Managing Director Daniel Campbell is not present 24/7. She stated Creative Woodstock will not just be performance; however, but will draw all sorts of events and classes. Ms. Stelford stated Creative Woodstock will be the conduit to gather the artists and businesses together.

Isabelle Brodzinski, 726 South Jefferson, stated she is a photographer and is part of the McHenry County Artists' Network and wholeheartedly supports this initiative. She opined Woodstock needs a dedicated, centralized arts center and the Old Courthouse is the location for this.

Mayor Turner stated it is his belief that while there are variations in the views expressed, given the comments in general, there is support for Creative Woodstock. He stated he would like to see an update on the action items noted previously, including a timeline if work can get started sooner and get out of the gate quicker. He stated he would also still like to see examples of other places that are doing this.

He stated because of the general support for this direction, because it does not cost a lot of money, because the space is not rented, and because it can be pulled back and adjusted if needed, he will provide his support and ask Staff to finalize a budget commitment.

Noting his experience as producer of Woodstock Children's Theater, Councilman Tebo stated there has to be a good marriage between the creative and analytical. He opined the business and the creative can do this together, telling Mr. Weber to "just make it happen."

There being no further Public or Council comments, Mayor Turner stated he is excited and has faith in the project.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no further additions, deletions, or corrections to the tentative Future Agendas.

ADJOURN

Motion by D. Flynn, second by G. Tebo, to adjourn this regular meeting of the Woodstock City Council to the next regular meeting on Tuesday, November 16, 2021, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers at Woodstock City Hall. Ayes: D. Flynn, L. Lohmeyer, W. Piersall, B. Seegers, G. Tebo, and Mayor M. Turner. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: T. Nierman. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smiley
City Clerk